

Jeremiah 11:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

Analysis

This verse describes Jeremiah's innocence: 'But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter.' The Hebrew keves alluf (קֶבֶשׂ אַלְעָף, trusting lamb) and similar phrases picture innocent, unsuspecting vulnerability. 'And I knew not that they had devised devices against me.' Jeremiah was unaware of the conspiracy until God revealed it. 'Saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.' The plotters wanted complete elimination—person, posterity, and memory. 'The tree with its fruit' may mean killing him and his message, or him and any descendants. 'Cut off from the land of the living' is a death sentence; 'name no more remembered' seeks total obliteration.

Historical Context

The lamb imagery anticipates Isaiah 53:7's suffering servant. Jeremiah's innocence contrasts with the guilt of his accusers. Anathoth's priests may have opposed Jeremiah's message because it threatened their religious establishment. The desire to eliminate his 'name' reflects ancient Near Eastern belief that remembrance extended existence—total forgetting equaled true death.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the lamb imagery connect Jeremiah's suffering to the later Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53?
2. What drives the desire not just to kill but to obliterate even the memory of God's messengers?

Interlinear Text

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וְאֵין־
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יָבֵל
לְטַבְתִּים
וְלֹא

H589 **But I was like a lamb** H3532 or an ox H441 that is brought H2986 to the slaughter H2873 H3808

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and I knew H3045 H3588 H5921 not that they had devised H2803 devices H4284

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against me saying Let us destroy H7843 the tree H6086 with the fruit H3899 thereof and let us cut him off H3772

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from the land H776 of the living H2416 that his name H8034 may be no more remembered H2142 H5750

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 20:10 (Parallel theme): For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.

Psalms 83:4 (Parallel theme): They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

Jeremiah 18:18 (Parallel theme): Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

Job 28:13 (Parallel theme): Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

Psalms 31:13 (Parallel theme): For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

Psalms 27:13 (Parallel theme): I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Numbers 1:14 (Parallel theme): Of Gad; Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

Isaiah 38:11 (Parallel theme): I said, I shall not see the LORD, even the LORD, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

Isaiah 32:7 (Parallel theme): The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right.

Psalms 116:9 (Parallel theme): I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.